

To:- The Chairman & Members of the
Tavistock Rural District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1945.

Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the year 1945. It is once again of a sketchy war-time character.

The general health of the district throughout the year remained good. The births slightly exceeded the deaths, and it is to be hoped that with the return of the young people from the Services that the gap will be widened. Of the 227 deaths, 136 or 60% lived to be 65 years and over.

Public Health Staff:-

Medical Officer of Health

E.D. Allen-Price, M.D. (State Medicine), Ch.B., D.P.H.
Birmingham.

To October 24th 1945, Sanitary Inspector & Building Surveyor

Mr. T. H. Harris, A.M.I.S.E.

Additional Sanitary Inspector - Mr. L. J. Shepherd, M.R.S.I.,
Cert. of Meat & Foods, etc.

From October 25th 1945, Sanitary Inspector & Building Surveyor

Mr. L. J. Shepherd.

From 26th November 1945, Additional Sanitary Inspector

Mr. T. Pyke, M.R.S.I., Cert. of Meat & Foods, etc.

SECTION A.

General Statistics.

Area in acres..	..	151,616
Population..	..	14,700
Parishes..	..	24
Inhabited houses..	..	4,900
Rateable Value..	..	£84,465
Product of Penny Rate	..	£ 335
Loan Debt..	..	£140,714

<u>Vital Statistics</u>			<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Legitimate</u>			
		Illegitimate	124	90	
			9	12	
			133	102	235.
					<u>England & Wales</u>

Birth rate per 1,000 resident population	15.9	16.1
Still births .. 2.	8.5	0.46
Still birth rate		
Deaths:- Males 108, Females 119. Total 227.	15.4	11.4
Death rate	12.6	2.79
Deaths from maternal causes .. 3.		
Deaths of infants under one year .. 12.	51	46
Infant mortality..		

The 235 deaths of residents were made up as follows:-

Infectious Causes

Tuberculosis ..	5
Syphilitic disease ..	1
Infantile diarrhoea..	1

General Causes

Cancer ..	25
Diabetes ..	2
Cerebral haemorrhage..	27
Heart disease ..	88
Bronchitis ..	8
Pneumonia ..	11

Total carried forward 168

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	Brought forward	168
Gastric Ulcer..	..	1
Other digestive diseases	..	7
Nephritis..	..	11
Maternal causes..	..	3
Premature birth..	..	10
Violent causes..	..	6
All other causes..	..	<u>21</u>
Total ..	227	
		=====

Age of Death Table.

	Under 1 yr.	1-4	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 & over.	Totals
Males	6	0	0	1	2	3	7	17	29	43	108
Females	6	2	0	1	0	6	8	20	29	47	119
Totals	12	2	0	2	2	9	15	37	58	80	227

SECTION B. GENERAL PROVISION OF THE HEALTH SERVICES.

The general provision of the Health Services remains as in previous years, and in the opinion of your Medical Officer they are generally speaking inadequate or non-existent. At neither end of the scale of life is there adequate public provision. For the old people there is only the work-house and for the expectant mother there is no public provision whatever within a reasonable distance. These are two points which seriously affect our social structure and require urgent attention.

SECTION C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

With the passing of the North Devon Water Board Act, your Council cease to be the Water Undertakers for the Northern Parishes, but it is hoped that with powers delegated by the Board that urgent needs will be proceeded with until such time as the main Scheme is in operation.

Sewage Disposal - Throughout the whole of your District there are innumerable examples of defective disposal of house and human waste, varying from obvious and dangerous nuisance to mild pollution of streams and watercourses. This state of affairs will take a considerable time to remedy, and I would ask your Council to insist on the strict observance of the Public Health Act and local Bye-laws.

Particulars of Inspections made during the year:-

Nuisances investigated and dealt with..	175
Water supplies, new and repaired..	64
Water Samples submitted..	10
Milk Samples submitted..	32
Visits to Cowsheds and Dairies..	99
Premises disinfected..	8
Premises disinfested..	3
Visits re proposed sites for new buildings..	32
New and re-laid drains..	51
Visits re Building Licences..	106
Miscellaneous visits..	78

Special supervision was given to the employees and one new painter-carpenter was engaged.

The check on the condition of the Council Houses (210) was commenced, which were found to be generally dilapidated - inevitable through war-time restrictions of materials and labour. A start was made on repairing all doors and windows; external painting was finished at the Lydford Council Houses and a start made on the eight at Brentor.

The Sewage Works and plants were generally supervised, as also were the water supplies.

A new Scheme was prepared and approved for watering and sewerage a part of the Parish of Lamerton.

SECTION D. HOUSING.

The Housing Survey of the Rural District was continued, and 925 houses were inspected and placed in the following categories:-

- (1) 317
- (2) 205
- (3) 231
- (4) 73
- (5) 99

The original Programme to build 364 houses over a period of eight years was revised to build 414 houses and 63 bungalows in four years.

As regards housing in general, no fixed policy can be made to fit your area as a whole, owing to such a wide divergence of geographical, economic and industrial circumstances; which will be further complicated in the future by the influence the proposed secondary education will have on the agrarian mind. For these reasons your Medical Officer recommends the Council to concentrate housing activities for the present on the larger places.

SECTION E. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Many cowsheds and dairies were inspected by your Medical Officer and Sanitary Inspectors, and with few exceptions a depressing state of affairs existed.

Meat - This was inspected in the butchers' shops. The Urban Council have sanctioned the subjoined table of meat inspections at their Abattoir, as your Council subscribes to the Inspector's salary.

Village food shops were inspected periodically. Most were in a satisfactory state of cleanliness, but it was found necessary to make repeated visits to a few proprietors in order to raise their general standard.

The amount of food stuffs condemned as unfit for human consumption was 7 cwt. 3 qrs.

Table of Meat Inspections.

	Cattle	Cows	Pigs	Calves	Sheep
No. of animals inspected	2075	1352	272	1227	9765
Percentage of carcases affected with Tuberculosis	•53%	3•47%	1•1%	•32%	-
Percentage of carcases affected with diseases other than T.B.	•96%	5•02%	2•21%	1•79%	•84%
Percentage of Organs affected with Tuberculosis	3•85%	7•61%	6•99%	•08%	•01%
Percentage of Organs affected with diseases other than T.B.	35•18%	37•5%	6•99%	•48%	7•59%
Total number of animals killed..			14,691		
Total number of carcases condemned for tuberculosis..	..			65	
Total number of carcases condemned for diseases other than tuberculosis			198		
Total number affected with T.B. in some part or organ..	..		203		
Total number affected with disease other than T.B. in some part or organ			2003		
			2469	or 16•8% of total	
				carcases inspected	

SECTION F. PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

As in the previous year, infectious conditions were characterised more by their variety than their numbers.

There were quite severe outbreaks of mumps at Bere Alston and Meavy, which showed an unusual predilection for adults. Measles occurred in semi-epidemic form at Lydford, Mary Tavy and Walkhampton, and whooping cough was severe at Bere Alston. Apart from these instances, the exanthemata and disease of childhood were not prevalent.

The following cases were notified by the practitioners:-

Pneumonia	11 cases
Scarlet Fever	12 "
Measles	67 "
Diphtheria	3 "
Encephalitis	1 "
Puerperal Fever	2 "
Erysipelas	3 "
Typhoid Fever	3 "
Whooping Cough	23 "
Dysentery	1 "

The three diphtheria notifications consisted of one child who had not been immunised who was very ill but recovered, another who was partly immunised and who was not at all ill, and the third which turned out to be an error of diagnosis.

Immunisation was proceeded with actively during the year, and out of roughly 4,000 children 38% of those under five years of age and 71% of school children have been treated.

Tuberculosis - Fifteen new cases of tuberculosis were notified during the year and five deaths were recorded. At the end of the year 84 persons remained on the register, consisting of 31 males and 41 females with pulmonary tuberculosis; 5 males and 7 females with non-pulmonary tuberculosis.

Infectious Diseases notified from Schools, 1945.

	Mumps	Measles	Chicken- pox	Whooping cough	Impetigo	Scabies	Ring- worm	Lice
Bere Alston	90	1	1	40	9	4	-	1
Brentor	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Buckland Mon.	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Coryton	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Kelly	10	7	-	-	-	2	1	-
Zamerton	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lifton	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Lydford	-	25	-	5	-	1	-	-
Mary Tavy	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	-
Meavy	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Milton Abbot	7	-	-	6	-	-	-	-
Peter Tavy	2	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stowford	1	7	15	-	-	-	-	-
Gulworthy	4	1	4	-	-	-	-	-
Walkhampton	36	38	-	-	-	-	-	-

Scarlet Fever at Stowford in Autumn

In concluding I would thank the Council for the ready hearing always afforded, and the Clerk and Sanitary Officers for their ready help at all times.

I am, gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,
E. D. Allen-Price.

